

care bill with tax cuts for other States and not his own State of Montana, which I can assure you he did not do. The same can be said for myself.

The legislative intent is absolutely clear on this. What the Court is deciding, in my opinion, is something that I can't believe they are even bringing in front of the U.S. Supreme Court because on the face of it, it makes no sense. Unfortunately, depending on how they rule, millions of Americans—millions of Americans—will see their taxes go up and their health care go away.

The intent is very real. It is very clear in the Affordable Care Act. Title I, page 1: Quality, affordable health care for all Americans. What was true 5 years ago when we wrote this bill is true today: The right to get the tax cuts has nothing to do with the State in which you live. If you are in America, then you deserve the opportunity to receive tax cuts that will make your health care affordable, whether you get your plan on an exchange run by the State or through healthcare.gov.

This is about moms and dads in Michigan and across the country being able to go to bed at night without having to say a prayer that says: Please, God, don't let the kids get sick because what am I going to do? The Affordable Care Act has provided an answer and the peace of mind for millions of Americans. We certainly hope that the Supreme Court will not take that away.

I would now like to yield the floor to the great Senator from Wisconsin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

TRAGEDY AT EMANUEL AME CHURCH

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, before I begin my focus on the Affordable Care Act, I want to simply state that my heart goes out to the victims of last night's shooting in Charleston, SC, as they participated in a prayer service at Emanuel AME Church. The victims and their families and the entire community are in my thoughts and prayers in the wake of this unspeakable hate crime.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Ms. BALDWIN. My colleagues and I gathered here on the floor today to share some good news—something we unfortunately don't get to hear quite enough on the Senate floor. I am here today with Senators MURPHY and STABENOW to talk about how the Affordable Care Act is working to strengthen and improve the economic security and the health security of our families all across the United States.

Before the Affordable Care Act, over 50 million Americans were uninsured, and seniors paid higher out-of-pocket costs for their prescription drugs. Insurance companies wrote their own rules and jacked up premiums. They denied coverage to people with pre-

existing health conditions. And in too many cases they dropped your coverage because you got sick, got older or had a baby.

Making the Affordable Care Act the law of the land marked a critical turning point that was essential to stopping these predatory practices and to giving our families the quality, affordable health care they deserve and they need. Now the story has changed.

As my colleagues have noted, we have seen a historic reduction in the number of uninsured since Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Thanks to the law, over 16 million previously uninsured Americans have received health coverage. This year more than 10 million individuals have an affordable, quality health plan through the law's new health care marketplaces. Nearly 8.7 million people are benefiting from the health insurance cost assistance provided under the new law.

I want to make it clear that the law's important benefits are making a real difference in my home State of Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, over 180,000 people have a quality insurance plan through our Federally facilitated Affordable Care Act marketplace.

More than 90 percent of these Wisconsinites are receiving support to make their coverage more affordable. More importantly, the insurance companies don't get to make their own rules anymore.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to the more than 2 million Wisconsinites who have some type of preexisting health condition. Insurance companies can no longer charge copays or deductibles for critical preventative services such as contraception or cancer screenings for over 1 million Wisconsin women. Thanks to the new law, 89,000 Wisconsin seniors on Medicare will see their prescription drug doughnut hole closed by 2022. In the meantime, these same seniors on average have saved \$913 each on prescription drugs.

I could continue on to share more numbers that prove that the ACA is working for our families in Wisconsin and in States across the country. But the real proof, the real story is about the faces and the people behind these numbers. It is about real people, real Wisconsinites, who are realizing the benefits of this law every day—real Wisconsinites such as Doug from Colgate, WI. At age 62, Doug was worried about becoming uninsured. He and his wife had been insured through her employer, but she was about to apply for Medicare. Fortunately, Doug was able to find an affordable health plan on the Affordable Care Act marketplace. He did not have to lie awake at night worrying about being denied coverage due to his recent heart surgery or another preexisting condition.

There are real Wisconsinites such as Kim of West Allis. Kim runs a small costume shop. She lost Medicaid cov-

erage when her son turned 18 years old. She went without medical care because she could not afford it, even though Kim's doctor had found an indication of cancer during a hysterectomy. But then she signed up for the affordable coverage on the Affordable Care Act's marketplace that costs only \$79 a month. And when she renewed her coverage this year, her premium dropped to \$20 a month. Without this coverage and the premium tax credits, she wouldn't have been able to afford the extra checkups she needed to keep track of the possibility of the cancer emerging.

Joelisa is a real Wisconsinite. She is a community health worker. Joelisa lost her health insurance when she switched jobs but was able to quickly find a new plan through the ACA marketplace. The plan cost only \$87 per month with premium tax credits—a tremendous tax savings from her \$500 monthly premiums through her previous job. Joelisa's health care coverage helps her manage several chronic conditions, including a metabolic syndrome that carries a high risk of progressing to diabetes, and it also makes sure that her daughter gets immunizations and stays as healthy as possible.

One part of this story has not changed, and that part is that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't want the Affordable Care Act to work. In fact, they continue to root for its failure. They don't want you to know about Joelisa's lower health insurance premiums or about Kim's affordable plan that is helping her prevent cancer.

Regrettably, what they do want is crystal clear. They want to repeal the law and turn back the clock to the days when only the healthy and wealthy could afford the luxury of quality health insurance. Since its passage, Republicans have spent countless days trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act by any and all means. They have tried to repeal the law in Congress by voting over 50 times—that is 5–0—to repeal all or parts of the Affordable Care Act. They have also tried to repeal the law by advancing politically motivated lawsuits, including the most recent one that would rob millions of Americans of the health insurance they have today. In Wisconsin alone, this would mean that over 160,000 hard-working Americans would see their taxes increase if they were stripped of their health insurance subsidies. That is enough to fill historic Lambeau Field twice. It is one thing to say the numbers, it is another thing to imagine the number of Wisconsinites that affects.

It is not only Wisconsin families who would be impacted by this devastation but also families in our neighboring States—neighboring States with Federal exchanges—such as Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa.

Republicans have tried to say they have an answer, but their answer is really nothing more than another tired

attempt to dismantle and repeal the Affordable Care Act. One of these proposals was put forth by a Republican colleague from my home State of Wisconsin. It would eliminate the health insurance subsidies in all States, including the federally facilitated and State-run marketplaces. His proposal would rob over 166,000 Wisconsin constituents of their premium support. His plan would attack the health care security of Kim and Joelisa. According to the American Academy of Actuaries, it would expand the ranks of the uninsured and raise premiums.

Naturally, his proposal would hand over the reins to the insurance companies and allow them the freedom to take us back to the days when they offered bare-bones plans without essential health care coverage. In Wisconsin, this means going back to the days when there were no—none, zip, zero—individual health care plans in the entire State that offered maternity coverage for families. We cannot go back, we must not go back, and we will not go back.

We know the Affordable Care Act is providing access, affordability, and quality in the State of Wisconsin. We also know that in the United States of America, health care should be a right guaranteed to all and not just a privilege reserved for the few. That is what we have fought for, and that is what we are going to continue to fight for as we move the Affordable Care Act forward.

I wish to once again thank my colleagues, Senator STABENOW and Senator MURPHY, for joining me on the floor this afternoon.

We have a case that is about to be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. There has been effort after effort in the Congress of the United States to repeal or defund all or part of the Affordable Care Act, but it is providing lifesaving coverage and good news for Wisconsinites and people across America.

I yield back my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 1 hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Chair.

TRADE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I believe we are moving to a very important debate in the next week as the Senate moves forward with legislation passed by the House of Representatives today that would advance trade promotion authority. Trade promotion authority is a delegation by the U.S. Con-

gress to the President of the United States, the Chief Executive—power that Congress has—authorizing and directing that the President go forward to negotiate a trade agreement. This trade agreement would then be brought back to the Congress and, through legislation, would be implemented. But the trade agreement would never be subject to full evaluation, full debate under the normal processes of Congress, nor would it be subject to any amendment. Indeed, if the trade promotion authority passes the Senate—maybe next week—this legislation, this trade agreement would be fast-tracked. That is why they call it a fast-track agreement.

The fast-track would mean that the treaty—they call it “agreement” to avoid the fact that a treaty requires a two-thirds vote—that this trade agreement would be brought up so that Congress—it would be on the floor for 20 hours, it would be subject to no amendment, and it would be voted on, up or down. It would be filed, for example, at 4 o’clock on a Monday afternoon and voted on final passage the next day at noon. That is the kind of situation we are faced with.

Fast-track has been used for a number of years, a number of times, but it has always been focused on trade—what the tariff rates might be between trading partners, details of trade agreements and definitions and those kinds of things. But this agreement is far more extensive. It is more extensive in the size and the scope of the trade agreement, the number of nations, and the fact that it would cover—if the Atlantic agreement is also approved—75 percent of the world’s economy.

But even more significant to me is that it creates something that is a non-trading entity, a commission, a trans-pacific international commission. This commission will meet regularly. It will be created by legislation with certain rules. But according to the Trade Representative who is negotiating in advance of this legislation on behalf of President Obama and who is advocating for it, it will be a living agreement. That means the entity itself, the commission, will then be entitled to make the TPP say different things, eliminate provisions it does not like, and add provisions it does like. In fact, the commission is required to meet regularly and to hear advice for changes from outside groups and from inside committees of the commission so that they can update the situation to change circumstances.

It is a breathtaking event. It says it is designed to promote the international movement of people, services, and products—basically the same language used to start the European Union. In fact, I have referred to it as a nascent European Union. I do not think that is far off base.

So we will have 12 Pacific nations come together in this agreement. Well, the trade agreement, I would suggest, colleagues, is not that big of a deal—a

part of it. We have free-trade agreements with big nations, such as Canada, Australia, Mexico, Chile. The negotiations—really have an impact with two nations of significance: Japan and Vietnam. Why we can’t negotiate trade agreements with them in a bilateral fashion? I don’t know. Why do we have to create a transnational union, an institution that has the power, as I will explain, to impact the laws of the United States of America? It is not necessary.

I voted for—it has not worked as well as we were told it would work, but I voted for the last bilateral agreement with South Korea. South Korea, like Japan, is our good friend. We do not have any fundamental disagreements with them. They are part of the civilized world and so forth. But they have a different view of trade than we have. They are mercantile. They have to be approached and considered in a different way. They just approach trade differently. They believe manufacturing and exports mean power. An actual study has shown not too long ago that mercantilism has enhanced their power. A nation with trading deficits like the United States has had their power diminished as their trade deficits have accrued.

So some of our colleagues reject mercantilism. It is not healthy to trade for sure. We would like to see it go away. But it is our trading partner’s policy. We have to deal with that reality when we negotiate agreements.

So what I will say, colleagues, is that this is a significant event. I see no reason that when we are attempting to create a trade agreement, it can’t be like South Korea in 2012. Why do we have to create an entirely new transnational union with the power where each nation has one vote? The Sultan of Brunei—Brunei is one of the countries, one of the 12—the Sultan of Brunei gets one vote, and the President of the United States gets one vote it appears, although from my reading of the document it is difficult to fully understand what they mean.

I would say, at the most fundamental level, this Congress should not fast-track any transnational union of which we are a part until we understand every word in it, we know exactly what it means, and the President can answer. I have asked questions. I have asked him what it means—the living agreement language—in a letter. No answer. I asked the President of the United States: Do you contend this agreement will reduce the big trade deficit we have or will it increase the trade deficit? They don’t answer. The only thing advocates for this treaty say is that it will advance or enhance employment in the exporting industry. That is the only statement they have made. Why are they being careful about that? I have listened to them. No one has ever said much more than that.

Well, in 2011, the President of the United States asserted, when he was promoting the trade agreement with South Korea—this was his statement: